
Howard E. Freeman, Ph.D.

Memorial Remarks Delivered by Sol Levine, Ph.D.

University of California at Los Angeles
November 21, 1992

Howard Freeman was born in New York City in 1929 and received his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees at New York University. After brief service as assistant social scientist at the RAND Corporation, he served on the faculty of the Harvard School of Public Health from 1956 to 1962. He then became the Morse Professor of Urban Studies at Brandeis University, where he worked for twelve years. He was a social science adviser to the Ford Foundation for Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean, after which he assumed his post as professor at UCLA. He was the founding director of the Institute for Social Science Research, a position he held from 1974 to 1981, and also served as chairman of the Sociology Department, with additional appointments in the Schools of Medicine and Education. While carrying out these various responsibilities, he was a very active adviser to foundations, to government, and to other professional associations.

He was a highly engaged and enormously productive sociologist throughout his career, and he left an unmistakable imprint in a number of fields. He was one of the first in the recent period, together with Leo Reeder, to delineate medical sociology as a field in sociology and to contribute prolifically to a number of areas in medical sociology, health services, and health policy.

With Ozzie Simmons he did studies of the fate of hospitalized mental patients and wrote a number of classic papers and a volume entitled *The Mental Patient Comes Home*, for which he and Simmons received the Hofheimer Prize of the American Psychiatric Association. He was also the recipient of the Myrdal Award of the American Evaluation Association.

He produced three very popular editions on social problems and produced several other major volumes and more than 150 articles.

Howard had a sustained interest in applied social science and with Peter Rossi made major contributions to elevate evaluation research to a more rigorous and scientific endeavor. Just a few days before his death he had been working with Peter Rossi in producing the fifth edition of their very popular book, *Evaluation*. Indeed, Howard was a leader in evaluation research. As Peter Rossi states, in a warm acknowledgment of Howard's contributions, "Evaluation research lost one of its pioneers, its best practitioner, and a prolific contributor. I lost a true friend and the grandest of collaborators."

Howard had a unique work and conversational style. He got to the point, to the crux of an issue or an article, as quickly as anyone I have ever known, and he was able to summarize his position easily, pithily, and vividly. He was most rigorous as a researcher and insisted that he and his colleagues not make inferences without supporting data. In many ways he was as pleased in obtaining firm negative findings in his studies as he was in obtaining positive findings. He was the ideal honest research investigator. He was a craftsman, and he cared about doing a good and faithful job—as a researcher or a writer, or as an editor.

He brought energy, skill, and imagination to building or improving organizations wherever he went, such as the Survey Research Institute at Brandeis University and the Institute for Social Science Research at UCLA. He took joy and pride in being able to play an active role in building and contributing to the eminence of the Sociology Department at UCLA. He also found time to serve as president of Litigation Measurement, Inc., a small consulting firm that undertakes social research for attorneys.

He welcomed new challenges. I think those who knew him well realize that he even enjoyed situations that others would run from, such as having his boat run into a pier and becoming involved in a legal suit. He loved marshalling his abilities, skills, and resources to deal with problems.

Students who worked with him consistently testify how unusually helpful and instructive he was in helping them to revise or reformulate their research problems or to refine their research designs. Regardless of how close some of us may have been to Howard, we may never have truly appreciated the enormous span and depth of his relationships with students, colleagues, and friends. He treasured these relationships. He knew a great deal about each of the people with whom he interacted professionally, and was an infinite source of information about people and networks across the country.

Howard was a great joy to be with and a source of merriment. He was perennially entertaining, more than he ever realized. He was unusually funny. I recall one time when he was recounting an event. He was very hoarse, and you couldn't hear him. After each account he would engage in tremendous laughter, and soon we would all be laughing with him. We never knew what he was saying, but we could not stop laughing. His wit was contagious. I also recall some of our typical phone conversations; Howard would report some news, and I would find myself responding, "That's good." Howard would characteristically retort, "No, that's bad." Howard sometimes even enjoyed the "bad" news when it provided him an opportunity for problem solving.

I was privileged to work with him in editing four editions of the *Handbook of Medical Sociology*. Each time was a rich experience working side by side with him, hearing him think out loud, voicing reactions, his feelings, his thoughts and judgments. He was unique.

One sensed an enormous immediacy and receptivity in being with Howard. We turned almost automatically to Howard to discuss any range of things—trouble on income tax, the right college for a child, the search for appropriate research assistants or university professors, or whatever. He was a boundless source of information. It was good to know how much Howard enjoyed life and the privilege of participating in it. He loved his friends, his colleagues, his students, the daily engagements, the problems—all of it.

He took great delight in watching his son Seth and his daughter Lisa grow up and become enterprising adults. He and his wife Marion had much fun and fulfillment in living in Hollywood Hills, in getting away on their yacht, in sharing experiences, and in enjoying their friends.

We were all aware of Howard's presence. He did a lot and assumed many tasks and responsibilities. He contributed enormously, and he will be missed very deeply. We will never forget him. He enriched our lives. We will find many occasions to remember him with deep affection and to offer a toast to him.
